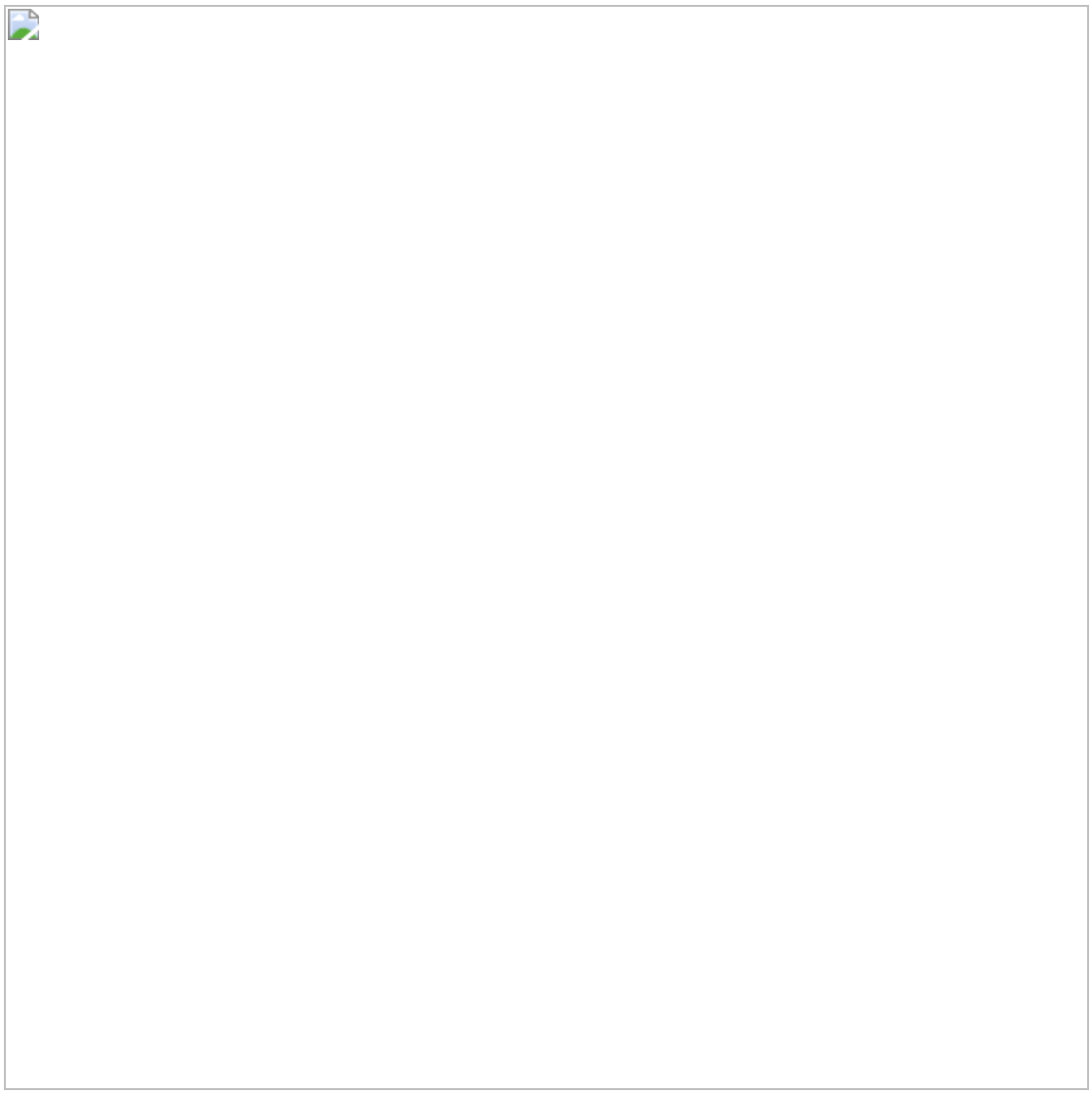
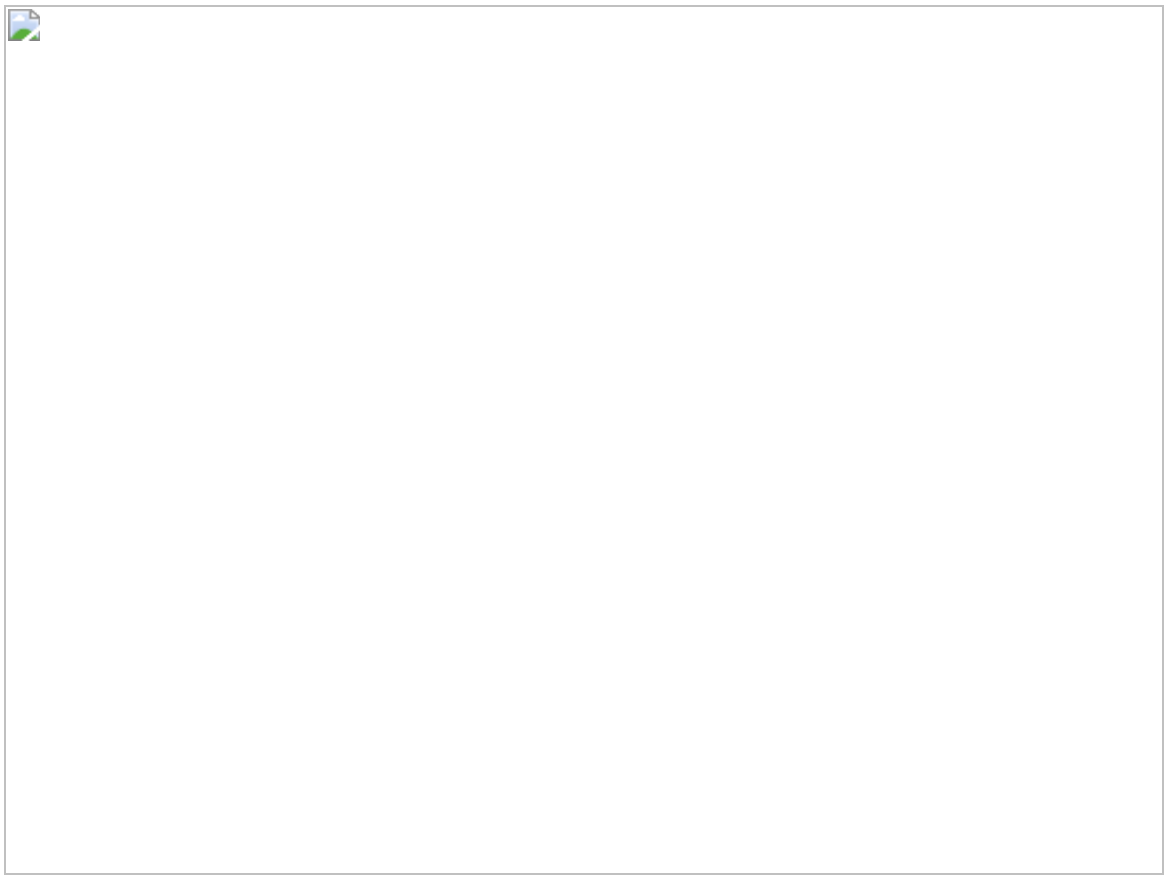
From:	Josh Hantman <hantman.joshua@gmail.com>
To:	Ehud Barak <ehbarak1@gmail.com>
CC:	
Date:	Wed, 12/19/2012 8:20:18 AM
Subject:	Re: Stiff-necked people

The op-ed piece for Prospect you authorized a few weeks ago.

ב-Dec 19, 2012, 1:26 בשעה AM, Ehud Barak <ehbarak1@gmail.com> כתב/ה:

> What's that?eb
>
> Sent from my iPad
>
> On 18 2012 בדצמ, at 18:40, Josh Hantman <hantman.joshua@gmail.com> wrote:
>
> > http://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/magazine/ehud-barak-israel-future/
> >
> > # Prospect Magazine
> >
> > # Stiff-necked people
> >
> > ### How to secure Israel's future





Israeli paratroopers in a parachute excerise (photo: Boaz Guttman)

There is an ancient maxim from the Babylonian Talmud that reads: "The Land of Israel is acquired through hardships." The closing months of 2012 once again attest to the veracity of this statement.

Just as a child cannot choose his or her parents, neither can a nation choose its neighbours. We live in a tough neighbourhood, one in which there is no second chance for those who are unable to defend themselves. A neighbourhood which is characterised by uncertainty, instability and hostility. For the state of Israel, true security must be viewed through a many-sided lens.

About 15 per cent of our citizens have spent the last decade under the direct threat of artillery rockets, mortars and missiles, launched indiscriminately by terror groups such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad. During the recent escalation with Hamas, half of

the country was within range of the terrorists' missiles launched from Gaza (and 1,500 were fired in eight days in November). Without the ingenuity of the Israeli-designed "Iron Dome" system, which intercepted more than 400 of those missiles, and the continued financial support for additional weapons batteries from the US, the loss, in terms both of human life and property, would have been far greater.

In addition to the threat from Gaza, on our northern border, Hezbollah, a Shia terrorist organisation based in Lebanon, has amassed an arsenal of around 70,000 artillery rockets and missiles. The Sinai peninsula has become anarchical while the brutal civil war in Syria has already trickled over into the Golan Heights.

Further afield, Iran remains the chief sponsor of terror, continuing—openly—to arm and fund the terrorist organisations seeking to destabilise the region. Its influence stretches to our doorstep through its support for Hezbollah, while the regime directly supports President Bashar al-Assad's brutal campaign in Syria. It aspires to be the regional hegemon and continues to develop its military nuclear programme. All the while, we face an incessant threat of jihadist terror from Judea and Samaria [the West Bank].

As a life-loving nation, facing this relentless terror, our institutions of national defence and security must be built on a wider bedrock of national resilience; that is the true strength of a nation.

National resilience derives from many factors: international legitimacy, a strong and vibrant economy, social cohesion, solidarity and unity, a sense of purpose, and a common vision regarding the future of the nation. These must be taken into account when formulating operational tactics or recalibrating strategic focus in the new and unpredictable environment of today's Middle East.

During the escalation with Hamas in November, the people of Israel have once again demonstrated exemplary national resilience in abundance. Israel's economy remained robust (with only minor fluctuations in the stock market), while the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) retained the support of the overwhelming majority of the population throughout the operation.

Once again, the IDF was forced to deal with the most extreme type of asymmetric warfare, fighting an internationally recognised terrorist organisation which continues to demonstrate a complete disregard for human life. While the IDF conducted intelligence-based precision strikes in order to minimise civilian casualties on both sides, Hamas again implemented its cynical and cowardly use of civilian human shields on the one hand, and launched barrages of rockets at our civilians on the other—a double war crime.

In the face of the great changes in the region, we continue to recalibrate our strategic assessments. Hamas is enjoying the tailwind of Muslim Brotherhood successes, while Iran, as well as its role in Syria, continues to deceive the world in its pursuit of nuclear weapons. This pursuit must be stopped.

On this matter, we, our friends and allies, think alike, and we mean every word we say. A military nuclear Iran threatens the entire world order. It is commonly accepted that it would be the start of a regional nuclear arms race. Saudi Arabia, Turkey and maybe the new Egypt will be compelled to join the race. The leaking of nuclear technology to terrorist organisations, whether Sunni or Shia, becomes almost an inevitability.

The world leadership—with the United States and President Barack Obama at the fore—holds the same view: a nuclear Iran is unacceptable.

It is often noted that the Iranian threat represents a complex challenge for Israel. That is undeniable, but for Israel, this "complex challenge" could become a potentially existential

threat. The US understands that only Israel itself will make the call regarding the issues vital to our security and our future.

That security and that future also depend on achieving a just and secure peace with the Palestinians. The answer is a two-state solution; two states for two peoples, the demarcation of a border in the land of Israel. A secure state of Israel next to a viable Palestinian state, the expression of the hopes and ambitions of the Palestinian people.

We are currently witnessing a dramatic geopolitical shakeup, one characterised by both uncertainty and instability. It is in times of such unpredictability that decision makers must lead wherever possible, shaping events, not merely being shaped by them. The challenges before us demand extra vigilance and attentiveness.

Israelis are a stiff-necked people. We must be strong and open-eyed; extending one hand out perennially to feel for any potential opportunity for peace. The other hand, however, as is imperative in our tough neighbourhood, must remain firmly on the trigger, ready to protect our citizens should the necessity arise.